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THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE HOPEFUL SEASON

Reports from farmers all over the country last month indicated intentions to increase the acreage of spring wheat 14 per cent, corn 2.3 per cent, oats 5.6 per cent, barley 23 per cent, grain sorghums 11 per cent, sweet potatoes 30 per cent, tobacco 10 per cent, rice 11 per cent; and to decrease flaxseed 3.3 per cent, white potatoes 4 per cent this year as compared with last year. This is the first spring in five years with any evidence of general stimulus in agriculture.

As to the season's early outlook, the big central fact is that a new chapter has been opened in the general after-war situation. Indeed, events are moving so rapidly that it is difficult to catch their significance. Only a short while ago the country was seemingly loaded down with surpluses of fiber crops, of grain, and of livestock. For four successive spring seasons, farmers have made their plans against a background of distressing surpluses in the open country, with most of the time fat prosperity in the cities.

We open our eyes this spring to something different. There are no big agricultural surpluses left, save the partly fictitious one of cattle. Moreover, the great city industries, expanded by a boom period, are already bracing their feet against that dull aftermath wherein security markets, profit, property values - and finally wages - have nowhere to go but down. An all round new chapter.

Agriculture might worry about urban purchasing power if she were still burdened with unwanted products. But the shoe is almost shifted to the other foot. So much so that, judging from the lessened population movement, an increased number of farmers apparently feel it financially safe to stay on the farms this spring and put in their usual crops.

Returning strength in livestock prices is the most impressive of all the general signs. Except for the cattle industry, wherein the numbers on feed have for two years tended to obscure the liquidation in actual breeding stock, agriculture has obviously emptied its surpluses of the major crops and animals. Over the country as a whole, reports indicate that farmers have not gone into action so hopefully in five years.

KEY REGIONS AT A GLANCE

THE EAST - Scraping the roads, plowing, planting early crops. Winter grain came through in good shape. Peaches, plums, pears in blossom. Weather thus far indicates an early spring. Poultry industry hurt by high grain prices. Dairy situation has apparently more hopeful undertone. General conditions only fair.

THE SOUTH - Busy with cotton planting. Grain and truck crops generally growing well. Some areas west of the River are too dry for favorable growth. Fruit prospects good except for local frost damage in Texas. General reports indicate fairly good financial situation among farmers and moderate optimism.

CORN BELT - Sowing small grains and fitting land for later planting. Winter wheat looking good almost everywhere in the region. Good seed corn scarce in certain areas but plentiful as a whole. Corn acreage likely to be somewhat increased. Rising prices of hogs are giving the expected stimulus to Corn Belt sentiment.

WHEAT BELT - Winter wheat looking generally good except in southern Nebraska, northern and southwestern Kansas, and portions of Oklahoma and Texas hit by drought. Spring work in full swing. Oats sown; are up from Nebraska south. Spring wheat being sown in north, with some increase in acreage over last year.

RANGE COUNTRY - Stock generally out of the feed yards. Range prospects good except in dry areas in south. Lamb crop good though handicapped by unfavorable weather last month. Some sheep and early lambs moving to market. Cattle situation developing some encouraging signs but still difficult for owners.

PACIFIC COAST - Eastern Washington and Oregon very dry; much reseeding of wheat, also alfalfa, etc. Spring work progressing rapidly. Fruit in blossom. Picking navel oranges in south. General conditions on coast appear slightly better, on the whole, than last spring.

INTENDED PLANTINGS IN 1925 IN PER CENT OF ACREAGE GROWN FOR HARVEST IN 1924

Crop	United	North Atlan- tic	South Atlan- tic	East North Central	West North Central	South Central	Western States
	Per ct.	Per ct.	Per ct.	Per ct.	Per ct.	Per ct.	Per ct.
All Spring Wheat.....	113.9	137.5	.....	162.8	104.9	.....	135.9
Durum Wheat (4 States)	112.5	.....	.....	.....	113.3	.....	97.4
Other Spring Wheat.....	114.4	137.5	.....	162.8	100.6	.....	136.5
Flaxseed.....	96.7	.....	.....	125.0	95.5	.....	109.5
Corn.....	102.3	105.9	104.5	102.4	100.8	102.8	105.8
Oats.....	105.6	111.1	117.2	105.2	104.4	101.7	114.0
Barley.....	123.0	114.5	105.9	118.3	117.6	88.6	152.2
Grain Sorghums.....	110.7	.....	.....	.....	101.1	114.0	113.9
Tame Hay.....	100.0	98.8	102.3	100.3	99.4	103.3	98.4
Potatoes, Irish.....	96.0	92.9	94.9	94.5	94.0	110.7	101.6
Potatoes, Sweet.....	129.5	121.1	126.9	128.6	120.0	133.1	111.1
Tobacco.....	109.9	101.2	113.9	94.3	100.0	108.0	.....
Peanuts.....	104.5	.....	105.1	.....	.....	103.5	.....
Rice.....	111.0	.....	100.0	.....	.....	111.2	110.2

The intention-to-plant reports show a tendency on the part of farmers toward a general expansion of acreages in 1925. If the intentions are carried out, and the weather during the season is such as to bring forth average yields, production in many lines will be greater than in 1924.

If reported intentions with regard to spring wheat plantings are carried out, and the abandonment of winter wheat is no greater than in the average year, the area of all wheat grown for harvest in 1925, will be about 7 per cent, or 3,800,000 acres greater than the area harvested in 1924.

The reports show an intention to increase the acreage of the principal feed crops by nearly 7,000,000 acres above that grown for harvest last year, while the outlook is for smaller numbers of livestock to consume the crop.

Producers of tobacco, sweet potatoes, peanuts, and rice, intend to increase their acreages of these crops. Of the crops on which reports were received, white potatoes and flaxseed are the only ones for which reductions in acreage are intended. No change in the acreage of tame hay for the country as a whole is contemplated.

It seems doubtful if the general expansion of production contemplated by farmers, would be to their best interests. Increased returns for the crops of 1924 were largely due to reduced supplies, either in this country or abroad, rather than to any increase in demand. The outlook indicates that any marked expansion in most lines would tend to lower prices and result in less satisfactory returns to farmers.

AVERAGE PRICES, AT THE FARM, OF REPRESENTATIVE PRODUCTS
Months Ending March 1, and April 1, 1925.

Actual prices received at the farm by producers. Average of reports covering the United States, weighted according to relative importance of county and State. Figures compiled by Division of Crop and Livestock Estimates of this Bureau. Quotations in dollars or cents.

Shows 1913, year ago, and latest available months.

	Feb. 1913	Feb. 1924	Jan. 1925	Feb. 1925	Mar. 1925
Cotton, per lb.	¢ 11.8	31.4	22.7	23.0	24.5
Corn, per bu.	¢ 51.4	76.5	112.0	114.5	112.1
Wheat, per bu.	¢ 80.2	98.0	162.1	169.8	164.0
Hay, per ton	\$ 10.74	13.60	12.70	12.83	12.39
Potatoes, per bu.	¢ 52.6	88.1	70.2	72.3	71.4
Oats, per bu.	¢ 32.8	45.4	54.0	53.4	49.7
Apples, per bu.	¢ 78.4	125.0	144.9	150.7	155.4
Beef cattle, per 100 lbs.	\$ 5.55	5.47	5.63	5.69	6.18
Hogs, per 100 lbs.	\$ 7.17	6.54	9.31	9.62	11.83
Eggs, per dozen	¢ 21.1	33.6	48.6	35.7	23.9
Butter, per lb.	¢ 27.6	44.4	41.3	38.7	39.5
Wool, per lb.	¢ 18.7	37.5	42.8	43.2	43.0
Veal calves, per 100 lbs.	\$ 7.23	8.51	8.50	8.87	9.21
Lambs, per 100 lbs.	\$ 6.34	10.53	12.69	13.13	13.48

The tendency was for all the important farm products to register some advance in price during February. This is in line with seasonal trend and the only exception among individual products was eggs, which normally decline at this season.

During March, however, all crop prices except cotton showed a decline. Hogs took the lead during March by making a 20 per cent increase. Beef cattle, veal calves, lambs, and butter also increased in price.

All these key products are materially higher in price than last year excepting cotton, potatoes, and butter. That fact is reflected in the expressed intentions of farmers to increase the acreage of all the important crops somewhat this spring excepting potatoes. (No report was compiled on intentions to plant cotton.)

PRICE INDEXES FOR MONTHS ENDING March 1, AND April 1, 1925.

1913 = 100

Farm products figures from this Bureau; commodity groups from Bureau of Labor Statistics, (latter shown to nearest whole number.) Shows year ago, and latest available months:

Farm Products

(Prices at the farm)

	<u>Feb.</u> <u>1924</u>	<u>Jan.</u> <u>1925</u>	<u>Feb.</u> <u>1925</u>	<u>Mar.</u> <u>1925</u>	<u>Month</u> <u>Trend</u>
Cotton	253	183	185	197	Higher
Corn	129	189	193	189	Lower
Wheat	125	207	286	276	Lower
Hay	124	115	117	113	Lower
Potatoes	137	109	112	110	Lower
Beef cattle	93	95	96	105	Higher
Hogs	87	124	129	158	Higher
Eggs	174	252	185	124	Lower
Butter	165	153	143	146	Higher
Wool	225	256	259	257	Lower

Commodity Groups

(Wholesale Prices)

	<u>Feb.</u> <u>1924</u>	<u>Jan.</u> <u>1925</u>	<u>Feb.</u> <u>1925</u>	<u>Month</u> <u>Trend</u>
Farm products	143	163	161	Lower
Food, etc.	143	160	157	Lower
Cloths & clothing	196	191	191	Unchanged
Fuel & lighting	180	168	177	Higher
Metal & met. products	143	136	136	Unchanged
Bldg. materials	182	179	183	Higher
Chemicals, etc.	131	135	134	Lower
House-furnishing goods	176	173	172	Lower
<u>ALL COMMODITIES</u>	152	160	161	<u>HIGHER</u>

RELATIVE PURCHASING POWER

(At February 1925 Farm Prices)

1913 = 100

<u>In terms of:</u>	<u>Of a Unit of:</u>				
	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>Corn</u>	<u>Wheat</u>	<u>Hay</u>	<u>Potatoes</u>
All commodities	115	120	178	73	70
Cloths, etc.	97	101	150	61	59
Fuel, etc.	105	109	162	66	63
Metals, etc.	136	142	210	86	82
Bldg. Materials	101	105	156	64	61
House-furnishing goods	108	112	166	68	65

	<u>Beef Cattle</u>	<u>Swine</u>	<u>Eggs</u>	<u>Butter</u>	<u>Wool</u>
All commodities	60	80	115	89	161
Cloths, etc.	50	68	97	75	136
Fuel, etc.	54	73	105	81	146
Metals, etc.	71	95	136	105	190
Bldg. materials	52	71	101	78	142
House-Furnishing goods	56	75	108	83	150

The indicated purchasing power of the important crops tended higher in February. The key livestock products practically stood still except in case of eggs and butter, which lost ground.

The rapid advance of grain prices through the winter left certain livestock products in relatively weak position as to purchasing power. This has been especially true of dairy and poultry products, having reached a point such as to discourage production of the latter.

GENERAL TREND OF WAGES AND PRICES

1913 = 100

<u>Year and Month</u>	<u>General Wage Level</u>	<u>Farm Wages</u>	<u>Retail Price of Food</u>	<u>Wholesale Price of Food</u>	<u>Wholesale Price All Commodities</u>
	N.Y. factory workers (1914=100)	(Monthly without board)	Dept. of Labor	Dept. of Labor	Dept. of Labor
1913	---	100	100	100	100
1914	100	99	102	102	98
1915	103	99	101	105	101
1916	116	108	114	121	127
1917	131	133	146	167	177
1918	188	161	168	188	194
1919	188	186	186	207	206
1920	226	214	203	220	226
1921	206	143	153	144	147
1922	201	138	142	138	149
1923	218	155	146	144	154
1924	222	156	146	144	150
1920 Feb.	273	---	200	222	232
1921 "	214	---	158	151	160
1922 "	195	---	142	135	141
1923 "	241	---	142	141	157
<u>1924</u>					
January	223	151	149	143	151
February	222	---	147	143	152
March	226	153	144	141	150
April	222	157	141	137	148
May	217	---	141	137	147
June	218	---	142	136	145
July	217	159	143	139	147
August	220	---	144	144	150
September	225	---	147	148	149
October	221	160	149	152	152
November	222	---	150	154	153
December	226	---	152	158	157
<u>1925</u>					
January	227	149	154	160	160
February	236	---	151	157	161

GENERAL TREND OF PRICES
1913 = 100

Year and month	Farm Price Crops 15th of month	Farm Price Livestock 15th of month	Farm Price of 30 Farm Products**	Wholesale price of Non-Agrl. Commodities*	Purchasing Power of Farm Products#
1913	100	100	100	100	100
1914	108	103	102	94	109
1915	110	95	100	97	103
1916	124	111	117	132	89
1917	208	164	176	176	100
1918	224	192	200	186	108
1919	234	198	209	195	107
1920	238	168	205	234	88
1921	109	107	116	161	72
1922	113	111	124	163	76
1923	136	103	135	167	81
1924	148	106	134	157	86
1920 Feb.	252	177	221	234	94
1921 "	120	117	128	178	72
1922 "	105	108	118	149	79
1923 "	130	107	136	172	79
<u>1924</u>					
January	140	97	137	160	86
February	141	98	136	162	84
March	138	100	131	161	81
April	140	102	130	159	82
May	139	103	129	157	82
June	142	102	130	155	84
July	155	101	132	154	86
August	163	114	139	154	90
September	154	113	132	153	87
October	157	120	138	153	90
November	151	113	137	154	89
December	156	110	139	157	88
<u>1925</u>					
January	166	120	146	159	92
February	169	124	146	162	90

* Department of Labor "All Commodities", excluding farm products and food.

Farm product index divided by index of non-agricultural commodities, revised on basis of new farm price index

**This is the new price index worked out by this Bureau.

NEW INDEX OF GENERAL TREND OF PRICES

On Five-Year Base, August, 1909 - July, 1914 = 100

The following table presents the new index of prices of principal groups of farm products, rather than the two groups, crops and livestock as presented on the preceding page. These indexes are on a five-year base which is regarded as a better normal base than the one year, 1913. By coincidence, the index for "all crops" and the dairy and poultry products groups equaled 100 in 1913.

Year and Month	Index numbers of farm prices					Wholesale Prices of Non-Agricultural Commodities 1/	Relative purchasing power of	
	Grains	Meat Animals	Dairy & Poultry Products	Cotton and Cotton-seed	All Groups (30 items)		Farmer's Dollar 2/	Farmer's Product 3/
1910	104	103	101	113	103	102	98	101
1911	96	87	95	101	95	96	105	99
1912	106	95	103	87	99	100	100	99
1913	92	108	100	97	100	105	96	95
1914	103	112	101	85	102	97	103	105
1915	120	104	99	78	100	101	99	99
1916	126	120	106	119	117	138	72	85
1917	217	173	133	187	176	182	55	97
1918	226	202	160	245	200	188	53	107
1919	231	206	182	247	209	199	50	105
1920	231	173	197	248	205	241	41	85
1921	112	108	151	101	116	167	60	69
1922	105	113	135	156	124	168	60	74
1923	114	106	147	216	135	171	58	79
1924	129	109	137	211	134	161	62	83
1924								
January	110	101	155	255	137	164	61	84
February	113	102	152	247	136	166	60	82
March	114	104	136	219	131	166	60	79
April	113	106	126	226	130	164	61	80
May	114	107	123	222	129	162	62	80
June	116	105	123	219	130	159	63	82
July	130	103	122	215	132	158	63	83
August	141	116	123	219	139	159	63	87
September	140	115	133	175	132	158	63	83
October	150	121	142	182	138	158	63	87
November	147	115	150	179	137	160	62	86
December	155	113	158	176	139	163	61	85
1925								
January	172	123	154	182	146	165	61	88
February	178	126	142	183	146	167	60	88
March	172	145	134	195	151	---	---	---

1/ Computed by Bureau of Labor Statistics from wholesale prices of all commodities except those from United States farms. 1910-1914 = 100. 2/ The value of one dollar in exchange for non-agricultural products at wholesale prices, compared with pre-war values. 3/ The value of a unit of the farmer's product in exchange for non-agricultural products at wholesale prices, compared with pre-war values.

THE TREND OF MOVEMENT TO MARKET

Figures show wheat, corn, hogs, cattle, sheep receipts at primary markets; butter receipts at five markets, compiled by this Bureau. All figures given to nearest thousand, that is, three ciphers omitted:

Month	WHEAT Receipts Th. bu.	CORN Receipts Th. bu.	HOGS Receipts Thousands	CATTLE Receipts Thousands	SHEEP Receipts Thousands	BUTTER Receipts Th. lbs.
1921 Total	435,606	340,908	41,040	19,764	24,168	472,011
1922 "	413,106	378,598	44,067	23,218	22,364	530,601
1923 "	386,430	271,858	55,330	23,211	22,025	549,207
1924 "	482,007	278,719	55,414	23,695	22,201	591,439
1924 Jan.	15,548	30,594	6,253	1,888	1,697	37,689
" Feb.	20,165	44,689	5,335	1,457	1,412	40,474
" Mar.	17,434	29,405	4,833	1,556	1,367	44,371
" Apr.	10,374	17,926	4,374	1,751	1,348	43,970
" May	16,039	15,988	4,321	1,890	1,344	57,462
" June	16,877	17,392	4,296	1,673	1,550	77,891
" July	39,911	18,453	4,091	1,798	1,672	78,089
" Aug.	88,461	18,841	3,196	1,934	2,005	57,624
" Sept.	81,183	22,084	3,216	2,566	3,027	47,760
" Oct.	84,858	18,877	3,990	2,737	3,295	42,220
" Nov.	58,081	15,231	4,904	2,363	1,879	30,417
" Dec.	33,076	29,239	6,604	2,083	1,605	33,471
1925 Jan.	23,247	35,820	6,105	1,869	1,467	38,118
" Feb.	18,493	20,833	4,558	1,530	1,388	35,421

In general, movement to market slows up at this time of the year, both because it is the latter end of the old crop season and because bad roads and weather hinder all movement.

Less wheat and only half as much corn moved to market during February as in same month a year ago. Hog movement also reflects markedly shorter supplies than last year.

Beef cattle moved in slightly greater numbers than a year ago. Sheep and butter shipments under same month last year.

COLD STORAGE SITUATION

March 1 holdings (Shows nearest million, six figures omitted:)

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>5-Year Average</u>	<u>Year Ago</u>	<u>Month Ago</u>	<u>March 1, 1925.</u>
Creamery butter, lbs.	18	10	46	29
American cheese, lbs.	24	35	42	35
Case eggs, cases	28*	44*	81*	22*
Total poultry, lbs.	91	93	138	131
Total beef, lbs.	136	100	141	130
Total pork, lbs.	790	878	779	867
Lard, lbs.	84	69	113	152
Lamb & Mutton, lbs.	15.1	2.1	2.3	2.2
Total meats, lbs.	1,024	1,063	1,020	1,100
Apples, bbls.	3.9	5.9	5.2	3.7

A heavy movement out of storage occurred during February in dairy products, eggs and poultry and some outward movement of beef. Pork, on the other hand, showed the usual seasonal movement into storage.

Stocks are above average in case of butter, cheese, dressed poultry, pork and lard. They are below average in eggs, beef, lamb. Stocks of apples about average.

*Thousands, or three figures omitted.

THE TREND OF EXPORT MOVEMENT

Compiled from Department of Commerce reports by Division of Statistical Research of this Bureau.

Month	WHEAT including flour	TOBACCO (Leaf)	BACON** HAMS AND SHOULDERS	LARD	TOTAL* MEATS	COTTON# running bales
	1,000 Bushels	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Bales
1923 February	12,197	24,380	64,488	89,055	75,023	360
1923 12 months	171,928	474,500	828,890	1,035,382	958,473	5,279
1924 January	12,143	47,579	79,067	132,758	90,430	547
" February	10,019	38,414	81,108	99,910	90,462	482
" March	9,374	61,172	66,694	100,726	74,464	332
" April	8,416	59,019	57,546	73,307	64,474	321
" May	7,206	39,660	45,584	62,648	51,427	326
" June	10,257	52,614	44,145	59,475	49,807	231
" July	7,600	32,520	53,769	86,788	60,406	211
" August	21,106	33,410	52,367	75,937	60,180	278
" September	39,244	37,245	43,117	65,810	50,088	737
" October	53,463	56,227	45,365	60,813	52,820	947
" November	35,102	44,229	35,430	49,120	42,395	1,307
" December	24,326	44,168	33,788	76,803	43,114	1,076
" 12 months	238,256	546,257	637,980	944,095	730,067	6,796
1925 January	12,928	35,446	56,169	78,440	65,705	1,076
" February	11,612	23,806	48,041	60,363	55,438	812

Export movement of wheat was fairly heavy in February. Nearly twice as much cotton moved out of the country as in same month last year or two years ago. Export of pork products and of meats in general much lighter than last year or two years ago.

It is of some significance, respecting our general agricultural situation, that wheat and cotton prices have gained strength from export trade while pork prices have advanced in spite of shrinking exports.

* Includes fresh, canned and pickled beef, bacon, hams and shoulders; fresh, canned, and pickled pork; mutton and lamb.

Includes linters.

** Includes Cumberland and Wiltshire sides.

GENERAL BUSINESS INDICATORS
RELATED TO AGRICULTURE

	1924 Feb.	1925 Jan.	1925 Feb.	Month's Trend
PRODUCTION				
Pig iron daily (Thou. tons)	110	109	115	Increase
Bituminous coal (Millions tons)	47	52	39	Decrease
Automobiles shipped (Thou. carloads)	52	34	38	Increase
CONSUMPTION				
Cotton by mills (Thou. bales)	509	590	550	Decrease
Unfilled orders Steel Corp. (Thou. T.)	4,913	5,037	5,285	Increase
Building contracts (Millions dollars)	259	255	253	Decrease
Hogs slaughtered (Thousands)	3,227	3,910	3,010	Decrease
Cattle " "	915	1,150	967	Decrease
Sheep " "	725	786	711	Decrease
MOVEMENTS				
Bank clearings (N.Y.) (Billions dollars)	18	27	21	Decrease
Car loadings (Thousands)	3,617	3,555	3,652	Increase
Mail order sales (Millions dollars)	30	35	34	Decrease
Men employed, N. Y. State Factorices (Thou.)	540	497	505	Increase
Av. price 25 indus. stocks (Dollars)	118	135	138	Increase
Interest rate (60-90 day Paper)	4.78	3.63	3.66	Increase
Retail Food Price Index (Dept. Labor)	147	154	151	Lower
Wholesale Price Index (Dept. Labor)	143	160	157	Lower

Many business men say that business is good but they say it with reservations. The steel industry has been very active but forward contracts from the great construction and transportation fields are not especially promising. The railroads have been hauling a remarkable tonnage but retail distribution is on a hand-to-mouth basis. Profits have been fairly good but there is the disquieting down-swing of the stock market. So it goes, a fairly good showing tempered with "buts."

The big resistance to readjustment in general industry is the high wage level. The persistent disparity between country and city earnings is still a serious matter to farmers. However, increasing signs suggest that the wage situation is going to have to adjust itself to the more basic readjustments of supply and demand now in process.

THE DAIRY SITUATION

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

There is one thing which stands out prominently at all times as we look back over the past season in the dairy markets, and that is the storage butter situation. The first development which attracted attention was the rapid increase in storage stocks, but now the fact that these enormous stocks have been reduced to a very moderate figure is of equal importance. Regardless of whether operators lost money or not in the past season's storage deal, the remarkable out-of-storage movement since September is an accomplishment which to many of the trade at one time looked like an impossibility. It is only a guess at this time as to what total holdings will be on April 1, but on the basis of daily and weekly reports covering markets which have been carrying a large percentage of the total United States stocks, it is quite certain that the carryover into the next season, if any at all, will not be burdensome. On March 1 the total holdings in all United States storages was 28,862,000 lbs. There has been reduction of approximately 15,000,000 lbs. since then in the principal storage centers alone, with the rest of the country still to be heard from.

Butter prices have followed a more or less unsettled course since March 1, although during most of the month they have maintained their position near the high point reached following the sharp advances in February. The current situation has found one of the chief elements of support to be the lighter winter production. As was mentioned a month ago, it may be repeated again, that production, in so far as receipts at markets are an indication, is noticeably lighter than in 1924. Market receipts for the first three months of 1925 will run about 7 per cent less than during the corresponding period a year ago. This, together with conditions in foreign markets which have practically eliminated imports of butter, will in a large measure account for the generally healthy tone in domestic markets. Incidentally, butter prices since March 1 have followed quite the general trend of last year.

So far as other dairy products are concerned, it may be said that the production situation also appears to be the principal influence supporting what on the whole is a steady to firm position. True, demand has been good, but milk production does not seem to be much in excess of what is really absorbed, even fluid milk markets in some districts being reported without the usual surplus. It is obvious how this will influence conditions in condensery districts, for example, where under usual conditions fluctuating amounts of surplus from fluid markets are to some extent part of the regular supply.

Domestic demand for all dairy products is, of course, another supporting factor. Looking for a moment at canned milk markets, export trade has been almost negligible. Still, manufacturers' stocks on March 1 showed further reductions, and were on that date at what may be generally considered a low figure. Cheese markets also continue their steady tone. It is of interest to note that cheese production in Wisconsin is apparently following the general production trend already mentioned. During the past few years, receipts of American cheese at warehouses, which on account of the prevailing system of marketing seem to reflect production quite closely, have revealed increases over each preceding year of around 10 per cent. This year, however, warehouse reports indicate that the quantity of cheese received is actually less than during the same period in 1924. Along with this, it may be said that cheese prices are 3 to 4 cents higher than a year ago.

DAIRY SITUATION

(Thousands "000" omitted)

Stocks on hand - March 1 - United States (Lbs.)

Year	In Cold Storage		In Manufacturers' Hands	
	Butter	Cheese	Cond. & Evap. Milk	Milk Powder
1925	28,862	50,134	89,859	5,301
1924	9,847	50,388	138,362	11,239
Change	+ 19,015	- 254	- 48,503	- 5,938
Per cent				
of change	+ 193.0	- .50	- 35.1	- 52.8
5 yr. change	+ 59	+39.7	- 30.7	- ---

Receipts of Butter and Cheese - Jan. 1, to Feb. 28 (Lbs.)

Year	Butter at Four Principal Markets	American Cheese Wisconsin Markets	February Butter Receipts
1925	69,695	31,496	33,824
1924	74,885	31,268	38,789
Change	- 5,190	- 228	- 4,965
Per cent			
of change	- 6.9	+ 0.7	- 12.8

Net Imports and Exports - February (Lbs.)

	Butter	Cheese	Cond., Evap., and Powdered Milk
1925	71 Ex.	2,478 Im.	9,131 Ex.
1924	4,996 Im.	2,619 Im.	20,202 Ex.
Change	-5067	- 141 Im.	11,071 Ex.

BUTTER SUMMARY (LBS.)

	1925	1924	1925 Inc.	% Inc.
In storage Jan. 1,	65,657	30,299	+ 35,358	+ 116.7
Production, farm and factory	229,788	236,649	- 6,861	- 2.9
Net imports	53	9,003	- 8,950	
TOTAL	295,498	275,951	+ 19,547	+ 7.1
In storage March 1	28,862	9,847	+ 19,015	+ 193.0
Apparent consumption,				
Jan. & Feb . . .	266,636	266,104	- 532	- .2
Average per month. .	133,318	133,052	- 266	- .2
Apparent consumption for February. .	127,753	127,021	- 5,741	- .6

THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

An accelerated seasonal increase in the receipts of eggs at the four markets during February has lifted the total receipts since the first of the year above those of last year. This increase is continuing into March. It is due mainly to increases at New York where larger arrivals of Pacific coast eggs continue to be a factor but is partially offset by decreased receipts at Chicago.

Virtual exhaustion of stocks of refrigerator eggs occurred early this year. The low point in holdings at the four markets was reached on February 27, or approximately half a month sooner than last year. Accumulation of stocks in the warehouses has been proceeding gradually since that time and as the latter part of March approaches are considerably heavier than in 1924.

Egg prices, as was to be expected, declined rapidly from their relatively high point at the beginning of February and at the close of the month had reached a price at which accumulation began. This level has been well maintained during March, with the result that eggs are being stored at a price approximately 5 or 6 cents higher than last year. The storage price trend during the active season of accumulation still to come will depend to a great extent upon the volume of egg receipts and upon consumptive demand.

The poultry disease situation is showing definite signs of clearing up. Modification and lifting of embargoes in many States was followed about the middle of March by the lifting of part of the embargoes in effect at New York against certain middle western States. Receipts of live poultry at that market, though below a year ago, have shown an increase. With the demand only moderately active, price fluctuations have resulted, but on the whole, prices have been fairly well maintained.

Receipts of poultry at the four markets have been considerably lighter than last year, with prices relatively steady. Storage holdings of poultry are still heavy which, coupled with a none too satisfactory demand, have resulted in an easier tone on the smaller sizes of chickens, although prices as a whole have remained fairly steady at a level equal to or above those of the corresponding period of 1924.

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POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION.
(Thousands, "000" omitted)
Stocks in Storage - March 1 - United States

Year.	Shell eggs (Cases)	Frozen eggs (Pounds)	Dressed poultry (Pounds)
1925	22	11,247	130,508
1924	44	23,106	93,497
Change	- 22	- 11,859	+ 37,011
%	- 50.0	- 51.3	+ 39.6
% change from 5-yr. av.	- 21.4	- 35.4	+ 44.0

Imports and Exports of Poultry and Eggs - January 1, to February 28, 1925

	Imports	1925	1924	Exports	1925	1924
Shell eggs (dozens)		328	52		2,797	6,069
Whole eggs, dried (Lbs.)		66	47)			
Whole eggs, frozen (Lbs.)		1,578	304)		13	67
Yolks, dried (Lbs.)		150	367)			
Yolks, frozen (Lbs.)		373	265)			
Egg albumen, dried (Lbs.)		267	117			
Egg albumen, frozen, prepared or preserved (Lbs.)		108	141			
Live poultry, (Lbs.)		42	46		64	102
Dressed poultry (Lbs.)	(2)	540	(2) 464	(1)	1,561	(1) 639
Canned poultry (Lbs.)		-	-		(3)	13

(1) Includes game. (2) Includes poultry dead and prepared. (3) Not separately stated.

Receipts and Apparent Trade Output at Four Markets - Eggs (Cases)

Year	Receipts	February Net storage Movement	Apparent trade Output	January 1 - February 28 Receipts	January 1 - February 28 Net storage Movement	App. trade Output
1925	1,130	- 51	1,181	1,695	- 650	2,345
1924	951	- 335	1,286	1,607	- 1097	2,704
Change	+ 179	- 284	- 105	+ 88		- 359
Per cent	+ 18.8	- 84.8	- 8.2	+ 5.5		- 13.3

Receipts and Apparent Trade Output at Four Markets - Dressed Poultry (Lbs.)

Year	Receipts	February Net storage movement	App. trade output	January 1 - February 28 Receipts	January 1 - February 28 Net storage movement	Apparent trade output
1925	19,383	- 3,983	23,366	46,968	- 1,496	48,464
1924	26,396	- 3,046	29,442	63,545	+ 2,133	61,412
Change	- 7,013	+ 937	- 6,076	- 16,577		- 12,948
Per cent	- 26.6	+ 30.8	- 20.6	- 26.1		- 21.1

THE SITUATION IN VARIOUS KEY STATES

(From Reports of State Statisticians of this Bureau)

IOWA - Many Iowa farmers have again burned their cornstalks in preparation of spring work in the fields. This practice is not general over the State, but in spite of the many losses sustained by farmers in the past few years and attending reasons for carrying out agricultural programs based upon strict economy, there are a few individuals in every county who will continue their critical and splenic mutterings and who will persist in burning from their fields that valuable humus building material which might later be counted in hard, cold cash.

Spring work is in progress in practically every section. The first 10 days of the past month were ideal for the preparation of fields, and there were few farmers in the southern half of the State who did not do some field work. Discs were sharpened, harness was oiled and stalk cutters and breakers were preparing the fields for small grain seeding. The fact of very few farm sales during the winter and early spring is undoubtedly attributive to a more optimistic outlook for farming. Very little grain is being sold, and in many counties corn will have to be purchased for feeding until the next crop. Farm help is plentiful. It is expected that fully 95 per cent of winter wheat will continue into the growing season without winter killing. In central and southeastern Iowa, in the heaviest winter wheat counties, the extremely dry soil conditions, particularly during February, have seriously hurt some wheat. This damage was caused from smothering by the blown soil and from the uncovering of the roots of the plants. This drought situation changed with a heavy rain and snowfall about March 14th. Grass seed acreage will be increased in southwestern Iowa although the usual amount of red clover seeded with timothy has been omitted because of the high price of clover seed. Sweet clover acreage is on the increase in many counties where this variety of legume is gaining foothold for pasturage and for soil rebuilding purposes. It is not expected that much sweet clover will be grown for seed as Iowa produces probably not over 5 per cent of the sweet clover seed sown annually in the State. This seed is imported from the Dakotas and from Grundy County, Illinois, mostly.

Iowa has earned the distinction and honor of becoming the first State to test more than a million cattle in the Federal-State campaign to eradicate bovine tuberculosis. On January 1, 1925, Iowa had tested 1,167,346 cattle, while Wisconsin, second in number tested, had tested only 778,625 head. Two counties have been designated by the United States Bureau of Animal Industry as modified accredited areas. Two more counties, Pottawattamie and Kossuth, the two largest in the State, are expected to be designated as accredited areas shortly. In the former, less than one-half of one per cent of the cattle reacted to the test. In the latter county, about three and one-half per cent reacted, and a retest is in rapid progress. State and Federal authorities in charge of this campaign expect a number of other counties to be organized and funds allotted for early work in this campaign. -- Leslie M. Carl.

TEXAS - During the past six months, the State has had only about one-half its normal rainfall, and as a result planting of spring crops has been greatly retarded. Fall sown small grain crops have suffered severe damage, and the spring sowing has been done under generally unfavorable conditions. Corn in many instances has failed to receive sufficient moisture for sprouting. Cotton planting has made progress in south Texas in the irrigated sections and in other localities where soil moisture was not entirely wanting. The planting of the main crop will begin in April. Ranges are very dry, but stock is still holding up without serious losses so far.

In the event that rain is too late in arriving, much of the corn acreage will go into cotton and the grain sorghums. Everyone recognizes the need of more feed crops to overcome the shortage of the past few years. If the expectations of Texas farmers are realized, there will be about 4 per cent, or somewhat over 1,000,000 acres, more land placed in cultivation than was farmed last year. A portion of this increase will be the result of the cultivation of land which has been lying idle, but most of it will accrue from the breaking up of ranches into farms and the clearing of new land. The low price of cattle and the relatively good price of cotton have combined to break up many of the old ranches into farm tracts. While every one of the nine crop districts of the State reports a larger prospective crop acreage, it is noticeable that in some of the east Texas counties a smaller acreage is expected, due, perhaps, to the intention to practice more intensive methods of cultivation. In one of these counties last year a farmer won the State competition by raising somewhat more than two bales of cotton per acre during one of the worst droughts on record by using better cultural methods. A few days of slow rain would be of inestimable value, and most of the moisture would be saved, as an unusually large amount of land has been broken ready for planting.

Cattlemen are in a perplexing position being confronted with a rising market and a drought condition that is assuming a serious aspect. Goat shearing has made good progress, and the shearing of sheep is beginning.

Building operations and business generally are feeling the effect of the uncertainty of conditions on farm and ranch. Orders for goods are being held in abeyance, and in some instances cancellations of earlier orders have been received. However, in those scattered localities that have been favored by rains, business activities seem unusually good. -- H. H. Schultz.

ILLINOIS - Active preparations for spring planting operations are now general in the State with some early planting well under way in the southern counties. Spring plowing has begun in scattered central areas. Late winter and spring weather has been mild, and the present outlook is that spring planting will get off with a favorable start. Farmers generally are undertaking this season's farming operations in the most optimistic state of mind since 1920. Farm work is well up to average. Fall sown grains have come through the winter in fair to good condition. Excepting red clover, farm seed supplies are ample. Farm feed supplies are ample to a surplus. Early reports indicate that a more liberal acreage will be cropped than in 1924. The present acreage prospect is for a 2 per cent increase in corn, 7 per cent increase in oats, slight increase in winter wheat, and little change

from the large tame hay acreage of last year. Excepting peaches, fruit reports are favorable. The supply and demand of farm labor are both reported at 95 per cent of normal. Farm wages are reported slightly higher than a year ago.

Livestock condition reports are favorable quite generally. The heavy hog run is over for this season in Illinois. The high and rising price of hogs will further work to slow up the market movement of hogs from farms as the corn-hog ratio now favors feeding. Cattle and sheep supplies on farms are fairly large, but less than a year ago. Dairy Cattle numbers are somewhat larger than last season. Feeding operations in general have been noticeably reduced this winter, especially in regard to the length of the feeding period. Spring pig crop will be substantially reduced from that of a year ago. -- A. J. Surratt.